at Alabgarh are not protected by the ASI or the State Government. However, the Government of Orissa has been requested to take necessary steps to preserve the inscription at Alabgarh.

World Heritage Site status to buildings of Maandu by UNESCO

†3306. SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Archaeological Survey of India has entered into any correspondence with UNESCO for giving world heritage Site status to building of Maandu; and

(b) if so, the reaction of UNESCO in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) Before submitting the nomination dossier of a property to UNESCO World Heritgage Centre for conferring World Heritage status, the said property should be included in a tentative list maintained by UNESCO. Accordingly, proposal of the Archaeological Survey of India to include Maandu in the tentative list has been accepted by the UNESCO and included in the tentative list.

Campaign to promote Medical Tourism

3307. DR. VIJAY MALLYA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal with the Centre to launch an overseas compaign to project India as an attractive tourism destination;

(b) what is the approximate number of medical tourists expected to visit India by 2010, and what are the projected earnings; and

(c) whether Government have relaxed the norms to issue visas to medical tourists and from how many countries the medical tourists are coming to India?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) Department of Tourism since 2002-2003 has launched several campaigns in the global print, electronic, web and outdoor media to position India as an attractive tourism destination.

(b) Medical Tourism is a new initiative launched during the current year and it is too early to forecast the numbers and earnings by 2010.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) A new category of visa called "Medical Visa" has been introduced by Government of India, which can be given to foreign tourists coming to India for medical treatment. Patients from over 55 countries are treated at Indian hospitals.

Formulation of Heritage Act

3308. DR. VIJAY MALLYA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that experts from Britain, France and other countries are showing interest in documenting the heritage sites in Karnataka;

(b) whether Government have any plans to bring a legislation for the protection and conservation of heritage building and sites;

(c) whether powers are proposed to be delegated to the State Governments to decide on the renovation and protection of heritage structures; and

(d) whether Government have any plan to bring Bidar, Gulbarga, Bijapur, Kittur, Mysore, Srirangapatna, Kudalasangama, Kaginele and other areas under the heritage areas?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) No, Sir.

However, the Hampi Foundation, an NGO has documented Chandramaleshwara Temple, protected by the Government of Karntaka with assistance from USA based Global Heritage Fund, and Krishna Temple, a centrally protected monument with assistance from World Monument Fund (USA) .

(b) There is an existing legislation—Ancient Monuments & Archaeological Sites and Remains Act 1958 for protection and conservation of ancient monuments and sites. Besides Government also proposes to bring in a legislation to set up a Heritage Sites Commission.

(c) Different States Governments have enacted their own legislations for protection and conservation of ancient monuments and sites. The Karnataka State Government has enacted Karnataka Ancient Historical Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act 1961.

(d) The State Government of Karnataka has declared Bidar,